

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the **INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

PCT

To:

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**COMMUNICATION IN CASES FOR WHICH
NO OTHER FORM IS APPLICABLE**

Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

25/03/2003

Applicant's or agent's file reference	REPLY DUE See paragraph 1 below
AFB/JAS/P8870WO	International filing date (day/month/year) 24/02/2003

Applicant

AIR PRODUCTS AND CHEMICALS INC.

1. REPLY DUE within 120 days from the above date of mailing

NO REPLY DUE

2. COMMUNICATION:

The applicant is informed that establishment of the international search report (ISR) for non first filings may be delayed due to a current search backlog.

Although the time limit for entering the national phase before designated offices under Article 22(1) PCT and elected offices under Article 39(1) PCT has, with effect from 1 April 2002 (see PCT Gazette 44/2001 Section IV) been set at 30 months from the priority date (before the EPO the time limit is 31 months from the priority date - see Rule 107 EPC as amended with effect from 2 January 2002 - OJ EPO 8-9/2001, 373) not all PCT contracting states have yet made the necessary changes to their national laws and will for the time being continue to require entry to the national phase at 20/21 months from the priority date if a demand has not been filed before the end of 19 months from the priority date - see PCT Gazette/PCT Newsletter available on the WIPO internet site at <http://www.wipo.int/pct/en/index.html> for an up to date list of the applicable time limits.

In these circumstances, the EPO acting as IPEA will accept, without any late payment fee under Rule 58bis PCT, the handling fee and the preliminary examination fee due in respect of the demand relating to the present application, even if they are not paid within the time limit prescribed in Rules 57.3 and 58.1(b) PCT, provided that they are paid within one month from the date of transmittal of the ISR; i.e., the EPO will only send an invitation pursuant to Rule 58bis.1(a) PCT after expiry of this one-month period. In all cases where the EPO has sent an invitation to pay and the applicant has not paid in full the amount due, the demand shall be considered as if it had not been submitted (Rule 58bis.1(b)-(d) PCT). A loss of rights may well be the consequence in designated states where the time limit for entry into the national phase under Article 22 PCT has already expired (see also Article 37(4) PCT).

Note that if the competent IPEA chosen by the applicant is not the EPO and if the fees mentioned above are not paid within the time limit prescribed in Rules 57.3 and 58.1(b) PCT, the competent IPEA is entitled to apply Rule 58bis.1(a) PCT immediately thereafter.

If your application is affected, we apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Finally, applicants are reminded that as of 3 January 2002 a rationalised PCT II procedure may apply, see OJ EPO 11/2001, 539 and that the EPO as ISA will not carry out international search on an application which relates to no more than a method of doing business, see OJ EPO 10/2001, 482. Applicants should also bear in mind the restriction of the EPO's competence as ISA and IPEA in certain technical fields in respect of certain international applications, see OJ EPO 1/2002, 52 and PCT Newsletter 1/2002 for further details.

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Authorized officer

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